

**Regional Interoperability Advisory Board (RIAB)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday August 29, 2007**  
**1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**  
**Kearney-Buffalo County Law Enforcement Center**  
**Kearney, Nebraska**

**RIAB Members**

Present: Al Berndt, Mike Jeffres, Sgt. Todd Beam, Timothy Loewenstein  
Participated via Conference Bridge: Mark S. Conrey  
Absent: Bob Brower

**Other Attendees (in sign-in order):**

Pam Kemper, Nebraska Office of the CIO, Network Services  
Dan Hiller, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency  
Bob Wilhelm, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency  
Jon Rosenlund, Grand Island-Hall County Emergency Management  
Josh Marshall, Hastings Fire Department  
Tony Paulson, Buffalo County Sheriff's Office  
Barb Liska, Seward County

The attendees signed-in. The agenda was distributed.

Al Berndt chaired the meeting. Attention was called to the *Nebraska Open Meetings Act* displayed in the front of the room. The attendees introduced themselves.

**CASM Training**

Mike Jeffres reviewed Nebraska's approach to using the CASM tool.

ICTAP developed CASM (the Communication Assets Survey and Mapping Tool) software to provide a Web-based tool that agencies can use to store interoperable communications equipment inventory and current radio communications infrastructure information. The data resides in a secure SPAWAR database that is accessible only by the participating agencies.

The CASM tool provides a geo-spatial representation of which agencies can communicate and the means of connectivity. The data can be revised by authorized users at anytime, making it a valuable ongoing tool for both agency assessments and urban area use. In addition, it can be useful in accessing and identifying an agency's resources.

You can designate access by regions and by counties, etc. Different levels of access can be assigned. Mark Conrey has transferred his responsibility as Administrative Manager of CASM to the State so the State can set the access hierarchy. Mike Jeffres is the CASM Administrative Manager.

Mr. Jeffres said the state has been approved to receive CASM training September 27, 2007 at the San Diego, California lab. The training session is limited to ten people. We will send two state staff members and one person from each local region. Each region needs to send Mr. Jeffres a "User Account Request" for their selected attendee.

### Interop-Solutions Statewide License

Mr. Jeffres said the State would like to purchase a license for statewide use of the Interop-Solutions software planning tool that the Central Region is using for their interoperability. It combines what we're doing with CASM and builds off of that to develop interoperable plans, and bring the state planning into it.

### NCOR (Nebraska Council of Regions)

Mr. Jeffres said the regional leadership group held their first meeting in Kearney on June 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. At that meeting they decided to formalize as the Nebraska Council of Regions (NCOR.) They held their second meeting in Lincoln on August 16, 2007 where they decided that NCOR should be a working group under RIAB. Participation will be voluntary. They chose Tom Perez, Thurston County Emergency Management Agency, to be the NCOR Chairman. The next meeting will be October 4, 2007 in Lincoln Nebraska.

### Nebraska APCO and NENA 2007 Fall Conference

Mr. Jeffres announced that the Nebraska Chapters of APCO (Association of Public Communications Officials) and NENA (National Emergency Number Association) are putting on a conference and expo at the Holiday Inn Downtown Lincoln from October 2<sup>nd</sup> through the 3<sup>rd</sup> this year. Pam Kemper is coordinating it. Send your registrations to her. A block of rooms is being held at a special conference rate until September 7, 2007.

### Statewide Planning – Statewide I-S License and Administration

Mr. Berndt said that a portion of the last NCOR meeting was a presentation by Interop-Solutions (I-S) on the capabilities and use of the Paraclete software license in the State of Nebraska. Subsequently, they met with the CIO's office. We discussed Terms and Conditions, timelines, activities, benchmarks and ongoing maintenance and support. We agreed in principle on what the license would include. We discussed the MOU required by the Department of Homeland Security for the State to use local grants to administer the Statewide Interop-Solutions license.

Currently, I-S and the State have an agreement in place as a result of the Nebraska State Patrol's use of I-S's Paraclete system. The CNRI (Central Region) counties also have an agreement in place with I-S.

We looked at the license terms of use. Considerations are:

- Use as a decision tool for regional communications plan templates
- Planning and coordination
- Database configurations and support for revisions
- How to integrate into local emergency operations on a long term basis
- Ongoing technical assistance
- Implementation of the hardware
- Testing and Acceptance

The License itself was defined in terms of:

- Maintenance, support, delivery
- A template tool as designated by the regions and the State
- A planning tool as designated by the regions and the State
- Establishing regional planning databases for the regions
- Establishing regional planning databases for the state
- An operations tool

- Must interface to any vendor selected

The scope of the license was discussed:

- Identifying the number of people I-S will provide for technical support
- Defining the level of support to be provided

Mr. Jeffres pointed out that the demand for this was already out there. It began with the CNRI RFP. The NSP is a little bit different. They are connecting their dispatch centers first, and then adding interoperability to that. Several counties said they wanted to do it too. So we started looking at how to make use of it as a planning tool. The License is a tool. It provides a way for planning and accomplishing statewide interoperability.

Mr. Berndt continued that there are two main things to be considered:

- 1) The MOU we write and sign
- 2) The funding for it – where the money will come from and future costs that will be paid.

The I-S statewide license cost is \$2 million. At the end of year 2, it will cost \$200,000 yearly to keep it in place and for ongoing support. Using the CNRI cost model, it would've cost \$4 million to purchase, and \$400,000 yearly to maintain.

There are multiple funding sources that can be brought together. I-S is allowing the \$200,000 that NSP paid to be applied as the down payment on the statewide license. The \$200,000 that the NSP paid came from the 2006 SHSP grant. We have \$134,000 available from lapsed SHSP grants, and another \$694,000 available from the 2006 SHSP grant. That's a total of \$1,028,000 in grant funds that can be applied for the purchase. That leaves \$1,172,000 to be taken from 2007 grants.

The \$2,200,000 pays the license through September 30, 2009. Beginning October 1, 2009, the \$200,000 yearly maintenance fee would become a cost to the State. It would not be a local cost. Mr. Berndt asked the State to have the license put in NEMA's name, and NEMA would assume the responsibility for it.

At the point at which we sign the contract with I-S, they will receive a portion of the balance. A series of benchmarks will be setup for subsequent payments:

- TICPs: local and state
- CASM utilization
- Implementation plan for utilization across the state

Mr. Jeffres said that the substance of it is for supporting regional operations. It will provide you with contact information – who is responsible for what. It will show you technical capabilities – yours and those of others. It will show you an inventory of resources available.

Mr. Berndt said regarding the 2004 lapsed grant funds, we have some MOU's in place for planning and for TICPs. Seven are currently in place or being completed. The 2007 SHSG says if you have an MOU in place, you can reapply for the money under the MOU. NEMA and the Lt. Governor have been in contact with DHS regarding the state communications system, the Interop license and the ability to enter into an MOU with the RIAB over use of the money for the Interop system. They have concurred and stated the

RIAB can enter into the MOU for the use of state/local money for the purchase of the license.

Mark Conrey commented that it provides local regional communications system planning ability, and depending upon the region's decision, if implemented, it can be utilized as an operational piece. Mr. Conrey asked if the regions still have to buy hardware. And is there still a backhaul cost?

Mr. Berndt replied yes, that is correct. The cost to implement the system is born by the local entity, whether by local funds or grant funds.

Mr. Conrey asked about any benefit to CNRI. They already have an I-S license.

Mr. Berndt replied that the state license is not intended to take away from or add to CNRI's license with I-S. However, it will remove the cost of the annual maintenance fee from CNRI.

Mr. Conrey asked, "What if someone decides not to use it? What impact would that have on what the State wants to achieve?"

Mr. Berndt answered that the State is viewing this as no different than the struggles we go through with keeping the LEOPs (Local Emergency Operations Plans) done and up-to-date. We do more for some counties than for others. We realize that not all counties are created equal. The information for all counties will go into the I-S tool and be used by the State even if a county decides not to implement it to its full level and capabilities locally.

Tim Loewenstein asked for a point of clarification. The terms of the CNRI contract are not negated except for the yearly maintenance cost piece of it.

Mr. Berndt confirmed that once the State License is in place, all counties can operate under it, but it does not negate the CNRI contract.

Mr. Loewenstein said the CNRI contract has special language and an extended maintenance agreement.

Mr. Conrey asked what happens if CNRI wants to roll into the State contract if it would be advantageous?

Mr. Loewenstein responded that CNRI might eventually decide to work toward that goal, but wants that to be an option, not a mandated overnight change. It is important for the NCOR partnership in the regions. We need to work together, but CNRI as a group gets to choose their destiny.

***MOU Motion and Agreement:***

***After discussion, it was moved and seconded by Tim Loewenstein, Buffalo County Commissioner and Todd Beam, Lincoln/Lancaster County Nebraska, to request and sign an MOU with the State of Nebraska allowing the State to expend local share of Homeland Security Grant funds allocated to the state in support of the Interop-Solutions license and planning initiatives for the state.***

There was a show of hands of the RIAB members present. The vote was unanimously “Yes.” Also noted was an email dated 8/29/2007 received at 1:06 PM CST from member Bob Brower indicating he is in agreement with signing the MOU.

Mr. Berndt asked Todd Beam to email Tom Perez the message that RIAB took action on this motion and it passed. Mr. Beam confirmed that he did so.

### **Federal Grants – PSIC**

Bob Wilhelm presented information about the Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) grant.

The PSIC grant program comes through the NTIA (National Telecommunications and Information Administration) in partnership with the DHS (Department of Homeland Security.) Funding can be used for the acquisition of, deployment of, or training for, the use of interoperable communications systems that use or enable interoperability with communications systems that support the 764-776 MHz and 794-806 MHz frequency bands as well as other available technologies to advance overall public safety interoperability, so long as those technologies will enable first responders to interoperate with the 700 MHz band in the future.

NEMA, acting in its authority as the State’s Administrative Agency (SAA) for federal grants, submitted the initial application on August 22, 2007. There’s a potential for \$8.5 million, the maximum we can receive. Awards will be made no later than September 30, 2007 and must be spent by September 30, 2010. Up to 5 percent of the total funds will be available at award. Remaining funds will be contingent upon submission and peer review of a Statewide Interoperable Communications Plan (Statewide Plan) and Investment Justifications and federal approval of applications and investment justifications. PSIC includes a statutory not-less-than 20 percent match. The Statewide Plan must be submitted by November 1, 2007. The Investment Justification is due by December 3, 2007.

Our intent and our efforts are toward interoperable software solutions and hardware. We’ll be doing all day workshops to be completed before the middle of October 2007. The workshops will cover all the grants that we manage. We’ll be looking at ways to monitor the activities required for all the grants.

Mr. Beam asked if his region were able to justify that they have that amount of infrastructure in place already, could they spend the entire amount?

Mr. Wilhelm responded that if they could prove that, they could spend the entire amount.

Mr. Berndt explained that there are inherent changes going on in the grant program. A new formula determined our base allocation award. We had to do a justification to prove that we deserved more. \$8.5 million is the max you can get. You have to prove why you deserve that amount.

Mr. Loewenstein said that proof doesn’t improve risk and exposure. It’s hardware and how you’re going to spend it.

Mr. Berndt said he doesn't know if they are going to do an impact assessment. We scored very high on strategy, but very low on impact.

Mr. Wilhelm said the 20% match is still in place. There is no minimum cash match.

Mr. Beam said you can't use Federal funds as a match.

Mr. Berndt replied that the only exception is the CCBG monies that have lost their Federal identifiers. These could be used for the match.

### **Federal Grants – SHSG**

Dan Hiller presented information about the State Homeland Security Grant (SHSG.)

NEMA reviewed the Investment Justifications from the locals and the regions. They met with the Policy Group and made their recommendations. The Governor has them. The Lt. Governor is going to make the award announcement prior to the USC/Nebraska football game.

This year, the State only received the base amount. We thought we'd get \$12 million, but we didn't. We received the GAN on August 13, 2007. We had to rethink our process. Instead of identifying projects, we're looking at putting blocks of money in each region. The regions can look at their projects and determine where they need to use the money. The CASM tool and the I-S process will help them identify the projects they want to fund. What we're thinking of doing now, is to give \$25,000 to each of the MOU cities, and \$50,000 to each PET region.

Mr. Beam asked about the State allocation. What are they spending it on?

Mr. Berndt responded that it will be spent on the statewide MOU.

Mr. Beam asked, "So, you are taking \$25,000 per MOU?"

Mr. Berndt responded that the bulk is being spent on the I-S MOU for the I-S license. The rest will be spent on administrative operations and programs, Fusion Centers, Leaders, the Department of Agriculture and the State Fire Marshall.

Mr. Beam asked, "So you didn't gain any ground with the I-S?"

Mr. Berndt replied that we did gain a lot of ground because the legislature funded the implementation of the build out of the State System out across the State. Where we took a hit is the program we had in place for Leaders and AG bioterrorism.

Mr. Beam replied that overall, they basically said, you guys are doing a great job, but you don't get much funding.

Mr. Berndt said Wyoming didn't turn in a justification and got the same amount of funding that Nebraska did. Knowing what we know now, we should have done the same.

Questions and comments were solicited. None were offered.  
The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:20 p.m.